

CLAIMS

1. Apparatus for customising user interface devices, each of the user interface devices having at least one user input region identified by a symbol and, operatively associated with the or each respective input region, at least one respective set of computer instructions for generating command signals for use in controlling at least one respective function of a remote target device, said apparatus being arranged to:
- a) receive control function selection information relating to at least one said function for inclusion in the interface device;
 - b) in accordance with the control function selection information, access from a location remote from the interface device at least one said set of computer instructions corresponding to a selected said at least one function;
 - c) receive layout selection information relating to a layout of the user interface device;
 - d) generate at least one symbol for identifying at least one of a control function, disposition and size of the or each respective user input region; and
 - e) in accordance with the layout selection information, produce an association file associating at least one selected said set of computer instructions with the or each respective said user input region, and initiate printing of the at least one symbol.

2. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the at least one said function is selected from the following operating functions: play, move forward, move back, stop, pause, volume, on/off, change channel, select specific track or other record on a specific storage medium, zoom, rotate, slide show mode, edit red-eye, and further
5 edit image functions.
3. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the at least one function includes at least one of: selecting a said target device and initiating communication with a said target device.
4. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, comprising a customisation interface arranged
10 to display the at least one symbol in the selected layout for printing onto the interface device.
5. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, comprising a customisation interface enabling an operator to perform at least one of the following operations: identify a said function corresponding to at least one said set of computer instructions; select at
15 least one said set of computer instructions for inclusion on the interface device; select a configuration of the or each symbol; control an arrangement the or each symbol in a desired relative disposition.
6. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, arranged to cause the association file and the or each selected set of computer instructions to be transmitted for storage on said
20 interface device.
7. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one said user input region in the selected layout corresponds to a plurality of user input sub-regions.

8. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, including printer apparatus operable to print the or each symbol directly onto a said interface device.
9. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, including at least one of the remote set or sets of computer instructions stored thereon.
- 5 10. Apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein the or each remote set of computer instructions stored on said apparatus is accompanied by information for generating a respective predetermined symbol relating to an associated control function.
11. Apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein at least one said set of computer instructions is for generating command signals for causing a remote device to access
- 10 remotely stored information that a producer of the interface device wishes a user of the interface device to access.
12. A method of producing an interface device, comprising using an apparatus as claimed any one of the preceding claims to print said symbols onto an interface device blank, or onto a surface for subsequent alignment with an interface device
- 15 blank.
13. A method of producing a customised interface device for use with a predetermined storage medium having predetermined contents stored thereon in the form of records, the method comprising inputting to an apparatus as claimed in claim 1 at least one set of computer instructions for generating a command signal
- 20 for selecting a respective one of said records, the or each set of computer instructions respectively including information for enabling said apparatus to generate a predetermined symbol relating to a respective said record, for printing said symbol onto the customised interface.

14. A computer program, for use in producing a user interface device having at least one user input region identified by a symbol and, associated with the at least one respective input region, at least one set of computer instructions for use in controlling a remote target device, said computer program comprising computer
5 executable instructions for causing computer apparatus to:

- a) create an association file linking at least one selected said set of computer instructions, obtained from a location remote from the interface device, with at least one said user input region;
- b) generate a symbol symbolising the or each respective set of computer
10 instructions; and
- c) generate a customisation interface arranged to display the or each symbol in an arrangement for printing onto the interface device, wherein the or each symbol is disposed so as to correspond with at least one said user input region.

15. A computer program as claimed in claim 14, wherein the or each set of
15 computer instructions is adapted to generate command signals for controlling at least one respective operating function of at least one controllable device, said operating function being selected from the following: play, move forward, move back, stop, pause, volume, on/off, change channel, select specific track or other record on a specific storage medium, zoom, rotate, slide show mode, edit red-eye,
20 and further edit image functions.

16. A computer program as claimed in claim 14, wherein the or each set of computer instructions is adapted to generate command signals for selecting a said target device and/or initiating communication with a said target device.

17. A computer program as claimed in claim 14, wherein at least one said symbol is disposed so as to correspond with a plurality of mutually adjacent said user input regions, so as to indicate a larger user input region comprising said plurality.

18. A computer program as claimed in claim 14, wherein said computer executable
5 instructions are adapted for causing computer apparatus to generate a customisation interface enabling an operator to perform at least one of the following operations: identify a control function corresponding to at least one said set of computer instructions; select at least one said set of computer instructions for inclusion on the interface device; select a configuration of the or each symbol; control an
10 arrangement the or each symbol in a desired relative disposition.

19. A computer program as claimed in claim 14, wherein said computer executable instructions are adapted for causing computer apparatus to cause transmission of the association file and the or each selected set of computer instructions for storage on said interface device.

15 20. A computer program as claimed in claim 14, wherein said computer executable instructions are adapted for causing computer apparatus to initiate printing of the or each symbol in a predetermined arrangement, for marking said user input regions.

21. A carrier having thereon a computer program as claimed in claim 14.

22. Computer apparatus loaded with a computer program as claimed in claim 14.

20 23. Computer apparatus as claimed in claim 22, comprising printer apparatus or a personal computer.

24. An interface device, customised for use in controlling a selected target device to access records stored on a remote storage medium, the apparatus comprising: a plurality of switches; a plurality of corresponding switch actuating regions; permanent symbols, corresponding to target device control functions, respectively
5 printed relative to said actuating regions; a controller for controlling the interface; a path arrangement operably connecting the or each switch with said controller; and transceiver apparatus for communication with said target device, whereby a user can use said symbols to identify a desired switch actuating region for generating and transmitting a command signal to the target device for accessing a selected record in
10 desired manner, the arrangement of the symbols having been selected and printed in accordance with the user's wishes.

25. An interface device as claimed in claim 24, wherein said storage medium comprises an optical storage device, said target device comprises an optical storage device reader, at least some of said control functions relate to selection of respective
15 records in the form of audio tracks stored on said optical storage device, and at least some of the symbols are text or graphical representations of the content of respective said audio tracks.

26. A method of producing an interface device using an apparatus as claimed in claim 1, the method comprising feeding into printer apparatus a blank interface
20 device having a printable surface portion formed integrally therewith, so as to print said symbols in a predetermined arrangement onto said surface portion.

27. A method as claimed in claim 26, wherein the blank interface device is constructed from flexible and substantially sheet-like material, for ease of processing through a printer mechanism.

28. A method of producing an interface device using an apparatus as claimed in claim 1, the method comprising feeding into printer apparatus an overlay sheet having a printable surface portion, so as to print said symbols in a predetermined arrangement onto said surface portion.

5 29. A method as claimed in claim 28, further comprising aligning the overlay in predetermined positional relationship with a blank interface device.

30. An overlay made using a method as claimed in claim 28.

31. A method of customising user interface devices, each of the user interface devices having at least one user input region identified by a symbol and, operatively
10 associated with the or each respective input region, at least one respective set of computer instructions for generating command signals for use in controlling at least one respective function of a remote target device, the method comprising:

- a) receiving control function selection information relating to at least one said function for inclusion in the interface device;
- 15 b) in accordance with the control function selection information, accessing from a location remote from the interface device at least one said set of computer instructions corresponding to a selected said at least one function;
- c) receiving layout selection information relating to a layout of the user interface device;
- 20 d) generating at least one symbol for identifying at least one of a control function, disposition and size of the or each respective user input region; and

- e) in accordance with the layout selection information, producing an association file associating at least one selected said set of computer instructions with the or each respective said user input region, and initiating printing of the at least one symbol.

5 32. A method of customising a user interface device having user input regions arranged for causing respective sets of computer instructions to be processed on the interface device so as to generate respective command signals for controlling a remote device, the method comprising;

- a) enabling an operator to identify and select desired said sets of computer
10 instructions corresponding to desired control functions for controlling at least one remote device;

- b) causing the selected sets of computer instructions to be transmitted to a user interface device for storage thereon;

- c) receiving information relating to a disposition of the user input regions on the
15 user interface device; and

- d) printing onto a surface of the user interface device, in alignment with
 respective ones of said user input regions of the user interface device, symbols
 respectively corresponding to the selected sets of computer instructions.

20 33. A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the relative dispositions and sizes of the symbols is dynamically selectable, at least one of the user input regions being dynamically arranged from a plurality of smaller user input regions.